Indiana Crop & Weather Report

United States Dept of Agriculture

Indiana Agricultural Statistics
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CROP REPORT FOR WEEK ENDING APRIL 17

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY

Many farmers were planting corn around the state last week, according to Indiana Agricultural Statistics. A few fields of soybeans were also planted. Rain early in the week halted field activities in some areas, but fieldwork was getting into full swing in most areas of the state. Corn planting is 3 days ahead of the average pace and only about a day behind the record pace established last year. Warm summer-like temperatures, low humidity and wind were drying out topsoil moisture in some areas during the week.

FIELD CROPS REPORT

There were 4.9 **days suitable for fieldwork**. Twelve percent of the intended **corn** acreage is planted compared with 13 percent last year and 6 percent for the 5-year average. By area, 12 percent of the intended corn acreage is planted in the north, 15 percent in the central region and 6 percent in the south. Farmers took advantage of the warmer weather and drier field conditions, especially during the weekend to accomplish fieldwork. Seeding of oats is virtually complete.

Forty-one percent of the winter wheat acreage is **jointed** compared with 43 percent last year and 46 percent for the 5-year average. Winter wheat **condition** is rated 70 percent good to excellent compared with 84 percent last year at this time.

Other activities during the week were hauling grain to market, spreading fertilizer and chemicals, purchasing supplies, FSA certification, preparing equipment, hauling manure and taking care of livestock.

LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE REPORT

Pasture condition is rated 5 percent excellent, 53 percent good, 37 percent fair, 4 percent poor and 1 percent very poor. Livestock are in mostly good condition. **Hay** supplies are rated 5 percent short, 80 percent adequate and 15 percent surplus.

CROP PROGRESS TABLE

Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5-Year Avg
	Percent			
Winter Wheat Jointed	41	16	43	46
Corn Planted	12	2	13	6

CROP CONDITION TABLE

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excel-lent
	Percent				
Pasture	1	4	37	53	5
Winter Wheat 2005	1	6	23	56	14
Winter Wheat 2004	0	2	14	65	19

SOIL MOISTURE & DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK TABLE

	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
	Percent		
Topsoil			
Very Short	2	1	8
Short	15	7	23
Adequate	69	71	60
Surplus	14	21	9
Subsoil			
Very Short	2	1	6
Short	8	4	17
Adequate	81	81	70
Surplus	9	14	7
Days Suitable	4.9	4.3	5.9

CONTACT INFORMATION

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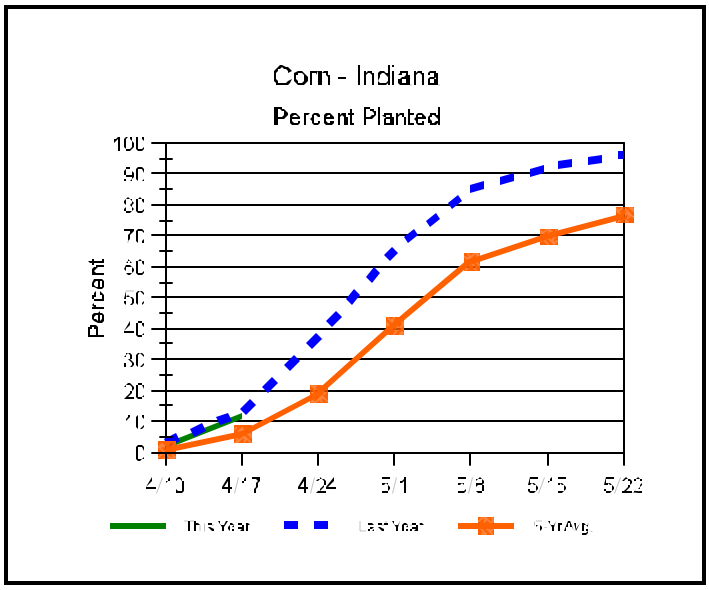
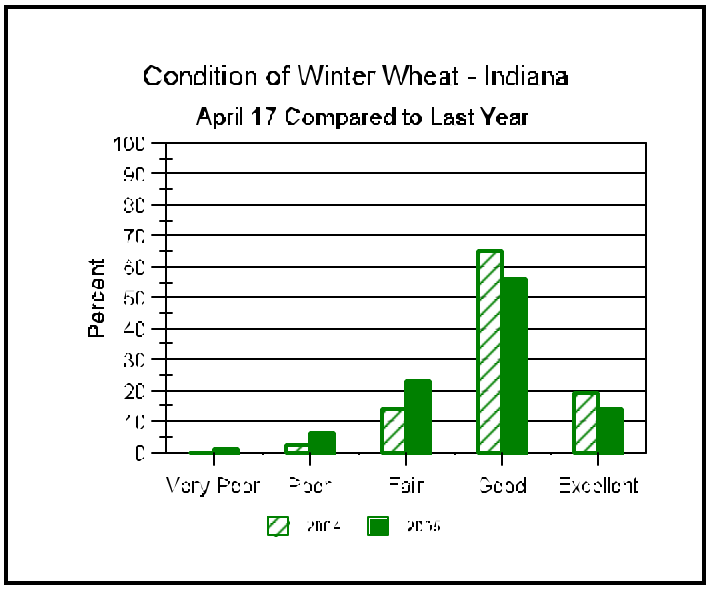
http://www.nass.usda.gov/in/index.htm

Crop Progress





Other Agricultural Comments And News

Not All Farmers Able To Make Hay In Marketing Forage, Expert Says

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Just because a farmer can cut hay doesn't mean he or she is cut out for the cash hay business, a Purdue University Extension forage specialist said.

Before producers jump into cash hay production or expand an existing operation, they should do their homework, said Keith Johnson. That homework includes identifying potential hay buyers and developing a production strategy, he said.

"There are a number of things that go into the successful marketing of hay crops," Johnson said. "Unfortunately, too many people don't plan ahead and think about the complexities of doing it well."

Although hay demand has been strong in recent years - especially as more city dwellers move to rural areas and buy horses - there is not an infinite market for forage, Johnson said. Farmers need to determine whether they want to focus on local, regional or national hay markets. The economics of each will vary, he said.

Farmers cannot approach cash hay production as a part-time job, Johnson said. A producer must invest the time required to harvest a quality product.

"It needs to be a priority," he said. "In the hay production and marketing side of things, we need a quality product. To have a quality product means it needs to be harvested on a very timely basis. It cannot be a secondary, do-it-on-the-weekend type of thing, because when weather is right for making hay, you've got to do it."

Hay quality differs from field to field and from legumes to grasses, Johnson said.

"The level of protein and the amount of digestible nutrients that are in the hay differentiate a high-quality hay versus a lower-quality hay," he said. "In general, legumes such as alfalfa are going to be of higher quality than grasses by themselves.

"People who cash crop hay ought to have an analysis of each of the different cuttings from a field so that they can merchandise that hay knowing what the quality is to the potential buyer. Through that they will find, many times, that the hay may be of higher quality than they expected it to be, or it could be lower."

In addition, a first-time hay producer needs to set realistic goals for both yield and price received, Johnson said.

"Everybody would like to raise that magical 10 tons of production per acre, but that doesn't happen very often and, in some careers, never," he said. "One has to be very cautious in determining a yield goal. Consider the soil resource, weather concerns and pest issues. A more realistic per-acre yield goal for budgeting purposes would be 4 tons of grass hay and 6 tons of alfalfa hay.

"A producer then should be realistic about pricing. Certainly, some of that alfalfa hay probably is going to sell for top dollar at $120 per ton, let's say. But if you get a rain-damaged crop, then all of a sudden it's worth $60 a ton. So as you work through the

(Continued on Page 4)

Weather Information Table

Week ending Sunday April 17, 2005

Station	Past Week Weather Summary Data							Accumulation				
	Air Temperature				Precip.		Avg 4 in Soil	April 1, 2005 thru April 17, 2005				
								Precipitation			GDD Base 50°F	
	Hi	Lo	Avg	DFN	Total	Days	Temp	Total	DFN	Days	Total	DFN
Northwest (1)												
Chalmers_5W	84	33	55	+5	0.53	1		0.76	-1.22	3	87	+42
Valparaiso_AP_I	80	34	54	+6	0.16	1		0.28	-1.93	3	86	+58
Wanatah	81	28	51	+5	0.14	1	54	0.38	-1.76	3	62	+42
Wheatfield	80	35	54	+7	0.51	2		0.82	-1.32	5	78	+57
Winamac	80	35	55	+7	0.28	2	53	0.45	-1.62	4	86	+57
North Central (2)												
Plymouth	80	34	54	+5	0.16	1		0.35	-1.81	3	72	+39
South_Bend	79	32	56	+9	0.02	1		0.11	-2.09	3	95	+72
Young_America	81	33	55	+7	0.21	2		0.39	-1.52	3	94	+66
Northeast (3)												
Columbia_City	77	36	55	+8	0.00	0	54	0.18	-1.88	2	81	+63
Fort_Wayne	78	34	55	+7	0.00	0		0.20	-1.69	4	81	+56
West Central (4)												
Greencastle	81	35	56	+5	0.65	2		1.06	-0.98	5	90	+39
Perrysville	83	31	56	+7	0.90	2	56	1.13	-1.05	4	106	+66
Spencer_Ag	81	35	57	+7	0.83	3		1.34	-0.88	6	94	+50
Terre_Haute_AFB	81	36	58	+7	1.07	3		1.32	-0.82	6	118	+65
W_Lafayette_6NW	83	29	56	+7	0.52	2	56	0.64	-1.38	4	109	+79
Central (5)												
Eagle_Creek_AP	84	39	60	+9	0.17	2		0.59	-1.48	6	138	+91
Greenfield	80	37	56	+6	0.27	2		0.93	-1.27	5	96	+61
Indianapolis_AP	80	39	59	+8	0.39	2		0.99	-1.08	6	128	+81
Indianapolis_SE	81	37	57	+6	0.37	2		0.88	-1.15	4	107	+65
Tipton_Ag	79	35	54	+6	0.39	2	58	1.07	-1.11	6	69	+47
East Central (6)												
Farmland	79	34	54	+7	0.36	1	50	0.93	-1.08	5	69	+49
New_Castle	78	33	54	+6	0.08	1		0.73	-1.52	5	61	+39
Southwest (7)												
Evansville	81	38	59	+4	0.58	3		1.03	-1.23	7	151	+58
Freelandville	81	39	59	+7	0.86	3		1.34	-0.76	6	133	+70
Shoals	82	41	59	+7	0.66	3		1.25	-1.03	6	134	+72
Stendal	81	42	61	+8	1.16	3		1.82	-0.66	7	166	+91
Vincennes_5NE	82	38	59	+7	0.96	3	56	1.65	-0.45	6	147	+84
South Central (8)												
Leavenworth	81	40	59	+7	1.09	2		2.31	-0.32	6	148	+83
Oolitic	82	38	58	+7	1.09	3	58	1.83	-0.41	7	115	+64
Tell_City	82	43	61	+8	0.68	2		1.80	-0.93	5	171	+89
Southeast (9)												
Brookville	84	37	59	+9	0.28	2		1.04	-1.06	6	113	+79
Milan_5NE	81	37	57	+8	0.46	3		1.30	-0.80	7	106	+72
Scottsburg	85	32	60	+7	0.86	3		1.69	-0.69	6	132	+69

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).
GDD = Growing Degree Days.
Precipitation (Rainfall or melted snow/ice) in inches.
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of .01 inch or more.
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

The above weather information is provided by AWIS, Inc.
For detailed ag weather forecasts and data visit the AWIS home page at
www.awis.com

numbers, be realistic about your assumptions associated with what the value of the crop is that you're merchandising."

Johnson developed a "scorecard" for helping producers determine if they are suited to enter or remain in cash crop hay. Each of the eight statements carries a point value ranging from zero - "never" - to as much as 20 points - "always."

The statements include:

1. "Next to family and religion, producing and marketing hay is the most important thing that I do." - 0-20 points.
2. "I can produce hay profitably 'on paper' with reasonable assumptions about yield, quality and input costs." - 0-10 points.
3. "I have a marketing plan." - 0-20 points.
4. "I can communicate with employees, customers and potential customers." - 0-10 points.
5. "More than half of my business is repeat customers." - 0-10 points.
6. "I use forage testing as a marketing tool." - 0-10 points.
7. "I can grow the business or know when to expand or reduce hay acreage." - 0-10 points.
8. "I seek counsel from professional resources when evaluating concerns of production and marketing." - 0-10 points.

Farmers whose scorecards total 90 points or more possess the skills and experience to run successful cash hay operations. Those with 80-90 points could turn a profit marketing hay. A score of 70 or less indicates a producer might not have what it takes to survive in the business.

Indiana ranked 29th among the states in hay production in 2003. Hoosier farmers produced 2.11 million tons of hay, at an average yield of 3.25 tons per acre. Alfalfa hay made up 1.33 million tons of the total Indiana production.

Additional hay production information is available on the Purdue Forage Information Web site.

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Agriculture News Page (www.agriculture.purdue.edu/AgComm/public/agnews/)

Related Web site:

Purdue University Department of Agronomy (www.agry.purdue.edu/)

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